

**VOLUNTEER STAFF MEMBER, DR. DALE A. MEYER'S  
"MISSION CENTRAL MINUTE" ...DIRECT TO YOU FROM HIS  
MISSION CENTRAL OFFICE! THANK YOU DALE FOR THIS  
NEW ADDITION TO THE LORD'S WORK HERE. DALE IS OUR  
NEW VOLUNTEER STAFF MEMBER, AND WE ARE GOING TO  
TRIPLE HIS PAY!**

The Fourth of July makes us think about our country. America has changed during our lifetimes, and in many ways it's not the "Christian" America we grew up in. It seems fewer Americans live by the Ten Commandments, go to church, or know Jesus as Savior. The Gospel lesson on Sunday, the Fourth of July, tells how Jesus returned to his hometown, Nazareth, and preached in the synagogue (Mark 6:1-6; Luke 4:16-30). Jesus' mission includes religious people, but they got upset because He said He is the fulfillment of the Scriptures. "No," they thought. "We know you and your family. You've got quite a reputation but don't upset what we believe." They were what Missionary Gary calls "normal people."

How would you and I have reacted had we been in the synagogue that day Jesus talked about Himself? Maybe the same way. But we aren't in that synagogue; we're in our congregations and communities today, and we know, as Paul Harvey used to say, "the rest of the story." Today Jesus isn't in that synagogue, isn't on the cross, has been out of the tomb for 2000 years, is not on the Mount of Ascension. He's done all that. Today He is pouring out His Spirit throughout the world and only one big thing remains. Jesus will appear so we can live with Him forever. In the synagogue back then people didn't realize Jesus is Lord of all. You and I know that because His Spirit has worked faith in our hearts. We are not normal.

Sometimes we get frustrated because people in our towns don't know Jesus as we know him. It can hurt even more when people in our congregations don't have a missionary spirit to tell others about Jesus. Jesus knows, and He might say, "Been there, done that!" Do we imagine it will be easier for us than for our Lord? Discouraged because people don't know Jesus and some of our fellow believers don't have a mission spirit? "The disciple is not above his master" (Luke 6:40). Isn't our experience now exactly what it means to carry His cross? Jesus carried it "for the joy set before Him," and so do we (Hebrews 12:2).

"The Spirit of the Lord is upon, because he has anointed me to proclaim good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim liberty to the captives and recovering of sight to the blind, and to set at liberty those who are oppressed, to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor." And then Jesus said, "Today this Scripture has been fulfilled in your hearing." Same today. Scripture is fulfilled when we hear about Jesus and help in whatever way to tell others about Jesus.

Preach you the Word and plant it home / To men who like or like it not,  
The Word that shall endure and stand / When flow'rs and men shall be forgot.  
(Lutheran Service Book, 586:1)